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and defects which we have pointed out in it — not in any fault-finding spirit, but because they were too conspicuous and important to be overlooked — are of such a character as seriously to detract from its authority and value. He has not, as it appears to us, been sufficiently mindful that *renommée*, as well as *noblesse, oblige* ; he has taken his task too easily, sure that the public would be eager to receive, and ready to accept and approve, whatever it should please him to furnish. We are sure that he is fully capable of making a much better exhibition of this great and important subject, if he would take the pains to reason out his plan more thoroughly, carefully weighing the comparative importance of every part, and verifying the consistency of his various views and arguments ; if he would lay out less of his strength upon the illustrative portion of his work, and more upon the theoretic and doctrinal, to which the other should be only subordinate and auxiliary.

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2. — *The History of the Jews, from the Earliest Period down to Modern Times.* By HENRY HART MILMAN, D. D., Dean of St. Paul's. Reprinted from the newly revised and corrected London Edition. In Three Volumes. Boston : William Veazie. 1864.

APART from all religious associations, the Jewish history has its own peculiar interest. The political system of the Jews was organized on the basis of a written constitution, or, rather, of a written code of laws which were irrepealable and unchangeable. This national charter of government did not, it is true, originate with the people, nor was it conceived in the spirit of an endeavor to secure the public liberties from the encroachments of power ; its authority was placed above and outside of any popular sanction. But it consulted, studiously and in the homeliest particulars, for the welfare of the people. It recognized the equality of all Jews, and made the most agrarian, and even Utopian, provisions for promoting the general welfare. From the very nature of it as a written charter of government, it became the safeguard of the rights of all. And, accordingly, it gave birth to political parties, to a class of strict constructionists, and to a body of constitutional patriots who watched with jealousy all departures from its precepts, and upheld the spirit of it as against the narrowness and the literalness of ignorant and technical interpretations.

An American, therefore, in reading intelligently the history of the Jews, not seldom finds his attention arrested by circumstances which bear a striking resemblance to some that have arisen under his own political system ; even in the same way, if the digression may be par-

done, as American readers of recent events in England have had occasion, in the disputes of the English ecclesiastics over a late judgment of the House of Lords upon the fundamental written articles of their Church, to notice how all our controversies over the Dred Scott decision, and the constitutional power of the Supreme Court, have seemed to find a parallel. Why, we are tempted to ask, since English people are so fond of deploring the belittling effect of a written constitution in political matters, should they retain a written constitution in their Church?

Among the Jews there was not so much a union of state and church, as a sinking and disappearance of the state in the church,—so that the Jew Josephus had to coin a word —“theocracy”—to express the idea of his national polity.

He, therefore, who sets about writing a history of this people, has before him a task of peculiar difficulty. He approaches a subject which is connected by a thousand threads with the most cherished opinions and feelings of a majority of his readers, and which is watched, night and day, by all the contemporary dragons of religious bigotry. At the outset he must justify himself for presuming to undertake at all to make up a history out of the sacred books of the Old Testament; for at once, as he goes about to investigate the date, the authenticity, the historical value of these books, he is confronted by the frowning dogma of the plenary, literal inspiration of the entire canon. Then appear, one after another, the matter of the Old Testament miracles, the prophecies, the claim of the Jews to be the chosen people of God, the relation of their system to Christianity, and the ugly differences between their approved and divinely authorized behavior and the Christian ideas of God.

Now it is not customary to ask of an historian that he shall make us a confession of his religious belief, nor to estimate the value of his labors by the standard of his theological orthodoxy. And yet, unhappily for the historian of the Jews, he cannot well escape a general application of this irrelevant criticism, since he writes of a people whose whole national life was bound up in their religion, and whose religion is commonly supposed, in an historical point of view, to have been vitally implicated with Christianity. When, therefore, Mr. Milman, more than thirty-five years ago, published in England his *History of the Jews*,—a work which was marked by a devout and reverential spirit, but also by the good sense and liberality of a scholar,—it was greeted with a howl of dissatisfaction. “Who,” cried one of his critics, “art thou, O man, who hast dared to lay bare the works of the Almighty arm, and delineate with such easy familiarity the acts of Him whose thoughts are not

as our thoughts and whose ways are not as our ways? We care not," it was candidly added, "what foundation the writer may have for such bold descriptions, nor how he may attempt to overwhelm us with the learning of Rosenmüller or Michaelis."

After an interval of thirty years, Milman has recently published a new edition of his *History*. A second edition had appeared in 1830. Mr. Veazie's excellent reprint sets before us Dean Milman's latest additions. The original work is very well known, and there is no need that we should speak of the charms of its picturesque and easy-flowing narrative, or of the genial and honorable spirit of sympathy with which he tells the sad and shameful story of this afflicted Jewish race. Of the manly liberality and fearlessness which marked it, we have already spoken. It is interesting to find that our author sees no occasion for retracting anything which he had formerly written in the interest of free inquiry. On the contrary, in a long Preface, which is written in a noble spirit, he now vindicates his position, and brings his work into relation with the advanced religious thought of the English Church at the present day.

In this Preface Milman claims "full freedom of inquiry" into the authenticity of the sacred books of Jewish history and all their contents, and the whole subject of Jewish history. He asserts that the one essential thing in the Old Testament, in a religious point of view, is its revelation of moral and religious truth; "beyond this sacred range, all, not only in science but also in history, is an open field." He is not anxious about the justification of the moral conduct of the Old Testament worthies; "Abraham, excepting in his worship and intercourse with the One True God, was a nomad sheik." He avows his continued belief in the miracles of the New Testament, nor does he find it possible to account, by natural causes, for all of the events recorded as miraculous in the Old Testament; yet he fully approves of the attempts to find such explanations, and condemns the habit of resting the truth and authority of Christianity upon the argument from miracles. "As such events recede," he says, "and must recede further into remoter distance and become more at issue with our ordinary daily thoughts and opinions, the belief in them becomes a stronger demand upon the faith. Men believe in miracles because they are religious: I doubt their becoming religious through the belief in miracles."

In the body of the work, the most interesting as well as the longest addition is a judicious and broadly conceived examination of the "concurrent facts of Egyptian monumental history and the Hebrew records." With a stout adherence to his English instincts, Milman will accept only a few very general conclusions out of the great number of closely

woven theories offered by the great German scholars. Even of the labors of his friend Bunsen our author bluntly says: "I confess that I have not much sympathy for this, not making bricks without straw, but making bricks entirely of straw and offering them as solid materials."

And now, in the interest of good letters, something ought to be said about Milman's style; for it is a style which is marked by extraordinary faults. It is, indeed, as to the main current of it, clear and easy and simple enough; it is also adorned by unobtrusive marks of classical and poetical culture, and occasionally by an apt and genial use of metaphor which is never excessive and never in bad taste. And yet sometimes, with strange facility, our author sinks, unconsciously and complacently, into the lowest mine of grammatical clumsiness, confusion, anacoluthon, and whatever else may render sentences unwieldy and meaning obscure. Nothing will illustrate what we mean so well as a few examples taken from the work before us; similar examples might easily enough be found in other of Milman's works.

Of Spinoza we are told: "And this did a man, himself of unimpeachable virtue, who, if his icy words ever kindle to any warmth, it is in commendation of purity, of kindness, of humanity, of universal charity." — Does not this remind one of the style of Mrs. Gamp? "Well," said Mrs. Gamp, "does Mrs. Harris know him, which indeed he is her own relation by her sister's marriage with a master sawyer."

It is said of Heine: "The one German whose short lyrics can be read after Goethe's may show what Jewish poets can become, if they will, I would that I could in his case say Christianize (though I believe that Heine's last hours were far different from his earlier ones), at all events fully and entirely Europeanize themselves."

Of modern Latin verse we are told: "No one, perhaps, can derive more pleasure than myself (through education, familiarity with Greek and Latin through Eton and academic studies and practice) from writers of modern Latin verse, the Italians, some of the French Jesuits, the Poles, our own Milton, Cowley, Gray, R. Smith, still I feel, every one feels that the whole is admirably ingenious but no more."

Again: "The history which at its later period is full and distinct in the relations between Egypt and Palestine, from Shishak to Necho, however the Books of Joshua and Judges may have been more incomplete and fragmentary than the Books of Kings and Chronicles, could not, if genuine or ancient, have been guilty of such an inexplicable omission."

And again: "Of what race or dynasty was the king, in what city of Lower Egypt (this alone seems certain) he dwelt, Memphis, Heliopolis, Sais, whether ruling over the whole country, or a local sovereign, there is no certain clew."

After referring to his work on Latin Christianity, our author, with a charming failure to convey his meaning, remarks: "As in Jewish history I shall touch but rarely and occasionally on that of Christianity, so in Christianity the history of the Jews sometimes forces itself upon the attention."

In reading of the distinguished positions held by Jews now and in past times, one is astonished to read that "M. Fould is now the finance minister, as in the older days of France and of Spain, to the Emperor Louis Napoleon."

And finally, where our author objects to the Jewish exaggerations in the matter of numbers, he says: "600,000 fighting men were checked and only secured from rout through prevailing prayer to God, by one Bedouin tribe, the Amalekites." — Milman undoubtedly did not *mean* to say that the Amalekites had been so powerful in prayer.

These sentences are not exceptional. It is perhaps the worst feature of these monstrous irregularities, that they occur most frequently in the recent additions and the newer parts of the book. Many of them seem to be accountable, as the errors of one who is used to write for the purposes of public speaking, where gesture and the tone and modulation of the voice will do much to supply what is wanting, and to illustrate what is obscure in the language of a writer. But however we may account for these faults, we can offer nothing whatever in excuse of them.

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3. — *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.* By ABEL STEVENS, LL. D., Author of "The History of the Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century, called Methodism," etc. Vols. I. and II. New York: Carleton and Porter. 1864. Small 8vo. pp. 423, 511.

No one of the various sects into which Protestantism is divided has been more diligent in preserving the records and traditions of its early history than the Wesleyan Methodists. Within the last thirty years the press on both sides of the Atlantic has teemed with histories, biographies, essays, and occasional discourses, designed to commemorate the founders of the denomination, or to illustrate the story of its wonderful growth; and to this praiseworthy endeavor to do honor to its early preachers we owe the preservation of much historical material of general and permanent interest. Among the writers in this country who have labored with the most success in this department of ecclesiastical history, the author of the volumes before us holds a high rank; and his reputation extends even beyond the limits of his own denomination.